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**THE DESIGN OF
CONTEMPORARY
ARCHITECTURE
TOURISTIC ROUTES**

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Abstract: Cultural tourism is an activity with the capacity to create sustainable development from its three economic, social and environmental pillars. Cultural tourism has the capacity to contribute to local development and employment generation, which requires the participation of different local agents. On the other hand, the knowledge and enjoyment of local heritage contribute to a greater appreciation of heritage, increase identity and empower society, which, in turn, stimulates and favours the implementation of resources for its conservation. This paper explores the necessary conditions for the design of tourist routes based on contemporary architecture. The design of the routes requires a prior diagnosis of the possibilities of the different buildings in terms of their heritage value, attractiveness, accessibility and state of conservation. In addition, it is necessary to create interpretation materials that allow for the enjoyment of the visit and to make proposals for routes that take into account not only the buildings' characteristics but also aspects such as themes, degree of accessibility or location, among others. This work is part of a research project financed by Generalitat Valenciana, whose objective is to enhance the value of Modern and Contemporary Architecture in the Valencian Community. At present, the region has an important cultural attraction. The iconic buildings or those of internationally famous architects are well known. Still, there is also local architecture, which, although not as spectacular as that which forms part of the current tourist routes, has heritage value and can be of interest to visitors and tourists. Focusing on this lesser-known local architecture, this paper shows the work carried out with the aim of designing routes based on contemporary architecture.

Keywords: Cultural tourism, routes, contemporary architecture, enhancement of value.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is nowadays seen as an opportunity for economic and social development, in addition to its capacity to preserve and protect the natural, cultural and historical heritage of places or regions. On the one hand, heritage elements become attractions around which unique tourism products are created and, on the other hand, aspects on which local communities build their identity and sense of belonging, Zdon-Korzeniowska et al. (2019), Buonincontri et al. (2021). Tourism is appreciated for its potential to transform mindsets by fostering multiperspective, a cornerstone of global citizenship education, among both 'tourists' and 'locals', Ormond et al. (2022).

This work aims to advance the knowledge necessary for designing tourist-cultural routes by enhancing contemporary architecture. Two objectives are pursued, firstly, to explore the characteristics that define a tourist route based on contemporary architectural heritage and, secondly, to advance and provide tools for designing tourist routes. Due to its characteristics, the proposal is framed within cultural tourism, coinciding with Origet's definition (1998): "that in which the main motivation is to broaden personal, professional, emotional and relational horizons through the search for heritage and its territory". Here we focus on the architecture of the region created from the second half of the 20th century to the present day. Unlike others of an iconic nature, the buildings we will be dealing with are not so well known to the public. Our aim is to highlight this other unknown architecture so that it can be enjoyed by local residents as well as by national and international visitors and tourists.

The design of the routes is framed as a task within a more global project where the previous tasks include identifying buildings of architectural interest, creating a catalogue

containing more complete information than those existing to date and developing digital media for their dissemination. In these, itineraries and tourist routes will be proposed to enhance the value of this heritage.

Before going into what aspects should be considered when designing the route, we should point out that it should cover objectives that, like Marcos (2014), we can group into three dimensions: social, economic and heritage. Firstly, in reference to the social dimension, the route will allow cultural consumption by local, regional and national residents, which means satisfaction from the enjoyment of these goods or experiences. Secondly, regarding the heritage dimension, the visit to the different buildings will improve awareness of the value of this heritage and will stimulate the implementation of mechanisms for its conservation and restoration; as Marcos (2014) points out: “they can contribute to the conservation of this heritage through the purchase of tickets or the payment of certain taxes and fees”. Although tourism can stimulate the recovery, conservation and restoration of heritage, it can also have adverse effects due to tourism overload as it can turn tourism into a threat, Throsby (2001), Millán (2001), Fernández (2006) and Troitiño, (2009). Thirdly, regarding the economic dimension, the route should, as far as possible, promote local employment concerning services directly related to the visit, such as guides and associated services, catering, accommodation and shopping (crafts, local products, ...). It is well known that tourism is a generator of employment, but, as several authors have pointed out, not in all cases is tourism capable of generating quality employment, Quesada et al. (1999); Cardona et al. (2000); Arroyo and Gutiérrez (2006), among others.

In many cases, these objectives are intertwined, as cultural supply and consumption increase well-being and enrich

people, which tends to generate an increase in cultural identity that, in turn, leads to an empowerment of the population that can have a positive impact on actions aimed at the protection and conservation of their heritage. It is by sharing and living the heritage that we understand, surely better, who we were, who we are, and where we are going, Ferreira (2020). As “cultural heritage is the identity manifestation of a community or social group, through material or immaterial elements that have a certain permanence in time, but which are in permanent evolution as a result of cultural changes”, Fernández y Ramos (2005).

The design of routes involves the enhancement of heritage, for which purpose it is necessary to diagnose which of the resources have the potential to become tourist attractions. From this point onwards, the necessary strategies must be proposed.

This paper begins with a study of the aspects to be considered for a correct route design. From this point onwards, the necessary strategies will have to be proposed. It begins with a study of the aspects to be taken into account for a correct design of the route. Among other issues, the elements related to the attractiveness of the resources and their selection are analysed. Secondly, the work shows the conclusions derived from the field study carried out on the offer of tourist routes focused on contemporary architecture, aiming to identify good practices and avoid the problems identified in previous experiences. Once these aspects have been analysed, the elements that our routes should contain are determined. A proposal is made of aspects to be analysed of the different resources considered by the specialists, with a view to selecting those that will form part of the various routes to be proposed. This article is part of the research carried out in the research project entitled *Enhancing the value of modern and contemporary architecture in*

the Valencian Community, funded by the Generalitat Valenciana.

METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve our objectives, the design of the contemporary architecture tourist route, a review of the specialised literature will be done, as mentioned above, with the aim of answering two questions. Firstly, based on tourist resources, what aspects should be taken into account when defining the route, secondly, what is the current situation of the offer of tourist routes based on contemporary architecture in our country? To do so, we will conduct a review of the specialised literature and fieldwork on the offer of contemporary architecture routes from three sources: websites, documentaries and promotional information on YouTube and APPs.

Information was collected from 35 websites and various videos, whether documentaries belonging to weekly programmes in the media or promotional videos. In the Apps case, we consulted those existing in the Play Store application. Regarding literature contributions, the work of Pedrosa et al. (2022) stands out by providing a review based on 194 papers that gives an overview of the literature on tourism routes.

The design of routes based on contemporary architecture aimed at a non-specialist public will require the development of appropriate materials that allow the public to enjoy the experience, Marcos (2014). The specific objectives of the fieldwork are as follows:

- Analyse various cases of routes offered and draw conclusions on good practices to build on and mistakes to avoid.
- Identification of the basic requirements that a cultural tourism route should meet in order to become a sustainable tourism product.

This work investigates the necessary aspects for the design of routes aimed at the general

public since, only in this case, we understand that the objectives previously envisaged will be fulfilled based on three lines: social, economic and heritage. From the social point of view, our aim is to disseminate the value of architecture, whether to the local population or to a wider area, based on the idea that culture generates societies with greater well-being; from the economic point of view, the non-specialised public represents a much greater market potential, a requirement for generating employment and local development; and thirdly, the preservation, conservation and restoration of heritage is more feasible when there is an awareness of its value on the part of society.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK THE RESOURCE AND TOURIST ATTRACTION

The design of routes based on contemporary architecture aimed at a non-specialist public will require the development of suitable materials that allow the public to enjoy the experience, something that cannot be achieved with the information that most of the guides and routes that exist today usually contain, either because the information is scarce or because it contains a significant amount of technical language specific to the field of architecture. It is important to know the shortcomings and successes of our own cultural and tourism management and to take advantage of this knowledge to adopt measures more appropriate to the economic, social and heritage reality, Marcos (2014).

The route design requires a prior inventory of the resources to be used. There are several methodologies in this respect, with the World Tourism Organisation's being widely used, which incorporates inventories as one of the basic working instruments. The inventory should include at least the following information: 1) location of the resource, 2)

typology and characterisation of the resource, 3) chronology of its construction and subsequent interventions, 4) current uses and economic and social importance attributed to it by society, 5) assessment of its state of conservation, 6) possible risks and threats to it, 5) necessary graphic and cartographic documentation.

A tourism resource is that which has the potential to generate tourism income from its tourism attractiveness. The resource itself may not have the elements necessary to generate an attraction. It must be accessible or be able to be seen or visited. Of the resources discussed in this paper, some can be visited only externally, and some can be partially visited internally. In our case, for many of the resources we have, information and interpretation aimed at the non-specialist public are the key elements for the route's success. Once the resources have been inventoried, inspired by Viñals et al. (2011), we assess their attractiveness from two points of view: intrinsic and recreational valuation. In the intrinsic valuation, we will consider the following criteria: representativeness, uniqueness, state of conservation and authenticity. In the recreational valuation, we try to determine the suitability of the resources as attractions for the public.

The different criteria in more detail would be:

- *Representativeness*: The level at which the element has characteristics or attributes that are specific to the group to which it belongs. This representativeness may be a common feature in the general sense of a movement or school, or it may be specific to the local level.
- *Singularity*: It is established according to the rarity of the element concerning the characteristics of the current to which it belongs.

- *State of preservation*: At this point, we shall take into account not only the conservation of the building but also the degree of transformation to which it may have been subjected and which distances it from its initial conception.
- *Authenticity*. As Benjamin (1989) points out: "The here and now of the original constitutes the concept of its authenticity". "The authenticity of a thing is the figure of all that can be transmitted in it from its origin, from its material duration to its historical witnessing". Authenticity is a key element contributing to a satisfying and transformative experience, Benjamin (1989). Authenticity is a key resource, Naramski et al. (2023) and Zhang et al. (2021).

Regarding the recreational assessment criteria, they must be assessed by taking into account that we are addressing a non-specialised public. We consider the following items:

- *Vulnerability or fragility* is understood as the lack of capacity to withstand the impacts produced by visitors.
- *Attractiveness*, in turn, depends on three criteria; firstly, uniqueness, the degree to which the resource is unique and unrepeatable; secondly, the state of conservation of the environment in which the resource is located, as it constitutes part of the scenic background or will affect its attractiveness and, thirdly, the size or dimensions of the resource. However, there is no written rule. Several studies seem to conclude that significant elements attract more attention than small ones.
- *Emotiveness* refers to the ability of the resource to create an emotional or

intellectual connection. The stronger the connection, the more apprehensible it is; therefore, the more attractive it is, Ham (1992). In many cases, the connection is not directly perceived, so guidance and interpretation play a key role. We will look for the potential to create an experience.

- *Capacity limitation.* There is an optimal level of visit to the resource from two points of view, one for the conservation of the resource and the other for the psychological comfort of the visitor. There is a large body of literature on the subject, of which we highlight Morant and Viñals (2009).

Other items:

- *Accessibility* by road and the possibility of access by public transport means.
- *Concentration* or not of resources. We ask whether the resource is close to or very distant from other resources.
- *Pedagogical value,*

Navarro (2015) proposes a methodology for assessing the degree of conversion into a tourist attraction based on several items (see Table 1). He classifies resources into five categories, depending on whether or not the resource is sufficiently converted to facilitate the tourist experience, especially taking into consideration the link established with the tourist. The categories for the resource are as follows: developed (sufficiently converted), semi-developed (insufficiently converted), pseudo-developed (developed without consideration of the link established by the tourist), underdeveloped (unconverted resource) and overdeveloped (over-converted resource).

Cebrián and García González (2010) make a methodological proposal for the identification, classification and enhancement of territorial resources. The elements that

make up the attractiveness are determined, and weighting is established to assess their weight or relevance to the attractiveness (see Table 2).

ROUTE DESIGN

A tourist route or itinerary is made up of a series of spaces arranged in a network, which, duly signposted, are of tourist interest. According to Fernández and Guzmán (2005, pp.106-107) “the route must present an integral image based on the complementarity between sites, services, attractions and communicational language”. The route is a product or destination that is born from the combination of resources and services. In addition to the aforementioned attractions, when designing the route, special consideration should be given to road accessibility, the availability of public transport and the concentration of resources, i.e. whether it is close to or far away from other resources.

The following are some of the aspects to be taken into account when designing the route:

- 1) Selecting an attractive central motif to promote awareness and dissemination of heritage.
- 2) Design the logo and milestones or signs to mark the route.
- 3) To carry out interpretation and communication work in which the values of the resource are conveyed to the target society.
- 4) Duration. Plan possible itineraries in which the distances and travel times between each building on the route are established. The times in many cases are reported for different types of transport. It should be taken into account that the price of the routes varies with their duration.

Element	Attitude	Facilities				Narrative				Activity			
Resource	Contemplation	E	G	A	N	E	G	A	N	E	G	A	N
	Interpretation	E	G	A	N	E	G	A	N	E	G	A	N
Representation	Participation	E	G	A	N	E	G	A	N	E	G	A	N

E excellent, *G* good, *A* average, *P* poor. Source: Navarro (2015)

Table 1. Tourism Attractiveness Diagnosis

Singularity	20		
Resource importance	19,5		
Conservation status of the resource	20	Resource	10
Number of visits	9	Environment	10
Accessibility	16,5	Physics	7,5
Signage	10	Legal	6
Resource in relation to environment	5	Information service	3
TOTAL	100		

Values are in percentage. Source: Cebrián y González (2010)

Table 2. Resource attractiveness

5) Promotion seeking the support of public institutions such as the *Diputació de València*, the *Conselleria de Turisme* and the presence in Tourism Congresses.

6) Connection with local services, looking for synergies, promoting employment and business creation.

7) Raising awareness for investment in heritage conservation.

RESULTS

From the field study carried out, we can establish a classification of the types of route promoters in contemporary architecture. The different types of promoters identified are as follows:

- Specialised travel agencies, although not very numerous, focus on the most important cities, especially Madrid and Barcelona.
- Public entities, mainly Provincial Councils, Town Councils and tourism entities of the Autonomous Community Administrations. Public entities are not present in all Spanish provinces, with an unequal presence between territories.
- The professional associations of architects. The vast majority of them usually offer a catalogue of buildings and information to assist the visit. In several cases, routes are proposed that include a group of buildings. As is logical, the information is focused on architects with a technical language, dealing with aspects of interest to the profession.
- Tourist guide agencies that offer themselves as specialists in this type of visit. Generally, architects and art history graduates.

- Online guides showing various buildings and providing information on their location and relevance.
- Culture blogs offer proposals on buildings of interest as part of their information agenda. Although they do not go as far as to formalise routes.
- Companies, on their corporate websites, generally related to architecture and construction. As in the previous case, they make proposals on the architecture of interest to professionals. Routes are not usually proposed as such.

Having analysed the type of promoters, we focus on the type of information provided. The main conclusions are as follows:

- However, in all cases, basic information is provided: architect, year of construction and location. In most cases, information on the characteristics of the building is not accessible to the general public. In many cases, it is created by and for architecture professionals. The content and the language are very useful for them, but it is not accessible to a non-specialist public, so much potential for the enjoyment of the visit is lost. Although this is clearly justified in the case of professional associations, it does not seem so in the case of other types of promoters. In several instances, we note that public administrations have made a significant effort to collect and make contemporary heritage known to society. Still, we consider that additional work on information and interpretation is needed to transmit the value of architecture and heritage to the general public to a greater extent.
- There are agencies specialised in contemporary architecture, which through guides with extensive training,

not only in architecture and history but also in tourism, make a significant effort to develop a more emotional interpretation.

- In some cases, although a route is advertised, what is displayed is an inventory of buildings where the visitor must decide which ones to visit.
- Public bodies and agencies deal with contemporary architecture in large cities, but there is a lot of unknown heritage elsewhere that has the potential to be enhanced.
- In a more indirect way, we can also introduce, within the contemporary architecture routes, different proposals for visits or buildings made in their blogs by companies related to architects, the media and cultural entities or platforms. Although in these cases, they simply offer a set of buildings of interest to visit.
- The routes are configured on the basis of the following aspects: the distance between buildings or the area in which they are located, the duration and the author. In the case of considering many buildings, it is common to propose self-guided routes that include those close to each other within a neighbourhood or area of the city. In other cases, routes are offered, generally lasting between 4 and 8 hours, in which the agency or promoter selects the buildings to be visited. In other cases, routes are offered by one or several architects of international relevance, or routes are proposed for a varied number of buildings by an architect of local relevance, who, in many cases, has imprinted his character on the city.
- Although we consider that their

presence is not yet widespread, apps are a very useful tool, allowing the enjoyment of the routes for a public that is not willing to contract through agencies. They make it possible, during the visit, to control the route, to access complementary services, such as hotels and restaurants, without having to have organised everything in advance, which confers significant comfort and security to the visitor. The routes can be designed and subsequently geopositioned using the tool provided by Google Maps, allowing access to all the information, not only on the existence of services such as restaurants, hotels, and nearby attractions, but also distances, times, and means of transport to access the different buildings that make up the route.

- The consultations indicate that the development of applications is still quite limited, focusing on large cities and, in very few cases presenting the aforementioned characteristics. We believe this tool is very useful and represents an important difference concerning other types of digital media, in which the different buildings are located, and a set of them is proposed for visits. On the other hand, creating applications with geopositioning and using Google Maps allows easy access to information that would be expensive to prepare beforehand.
- Concerning the Valencian Community and more focused on the city of Valencia, we see that travel agencies and tour guide companies working on contemporary architecture focus on the city's best-known buildings by famous architects, such as the various buildings by Santiago Calatrava and Norman Foster's Palacio de Congresos.

These companies do not address the lesser-known local architecture, which is the focus of our project.

Having consulted the information of the public entities oriented to the promotion of tourism in the Valencian Community, it has been observed that, although there is a presence of local contemporary architecture other than that described above, we understand that given its potential, strategies could be designed to enhance the value of this heritage and make it better known to the population. This purpose guides the work of the research project in which this work is framed.

Based on the information gathered, we propose the following Table 3, which includes the characteristics of each resource with a view to its applicability on the route.

Cultural heritage comes alive if it can communicate knowledge effectively and contribute to the cultural development of society. Communication is therefore essential to disseminate knowledge to visitors, especially tourists, Solima et al. (2018). It is aimed to create experiential tourism capable of generating emotions. In this sense, we highlight two fundamental elements, firstly, the need to guide the visitor's gaze and, secondly, to create a narrative that brings the building closer to the visitor's life or experience. We have observed that documentaries produced for television and magazines on architecture aimed at the general public allow us to observe architecture from the point of view of the technician who knows this art, something that is generally complicated for the public who has not received specific training. The ability to look and see is a fundamental aspect of the experience. This will be a determining factor in the selection of the images of the building to be incorporated into websites and applications. But it will also be a key issue in the task to be carried out by the guides, who must have the training and skills to

guide visitors' gaze. Concerning the story, to generate emotions, visitors must identify with what they are visiting. People empathise more with places, stories and personalities that connect emotionally with them. It is necessary to contextualise the building with the local history and, as far as possible, with the social and historical context that every visitor can identify with as part of their history. Also important are the anecdotes that have occurred, the vicissitudes of the construction and, in this sense, those details related to the people who have lived in or occupied the buildings. In short, everything that has the capacity to bring the visitor's life and previous experience with the building closer to them.

Another aspect that cannot be forgotten is the fact that the success of the route requires a shared strategy in both planning and management on the part of the various agents that may intervene: owners of the buildings, public, local or regional administrations, entrepreneurs, residents, tour operators and agencies, guides, restaurants and hotels, among others. Focusing on the issue of marketing, marketing channels such as the presence on the websites of public institutions promoting tourism, guide agencies, and travel agencies will be necessary.

Based on the fieldwork and the experts, the following aspects are proposed to be taken into account for the elaboration of the information for each building:

- Architect and possible anecdotes of the architect in relation to the realisation of the project and its programme of requirements.
- Localization.
- Accessibility by public and private transport.
- Possibility of visiting the interior spaces, specifying which spaces can and cannot be visited.

Intrinsic value	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Null
Representativeness					
Singularity					
Conservation status					
Authenticity					
Recreational assessment	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Null
Vulnerability					
Uniqueness					
Emotivity					
Pedagogical value					
Dimensions					
Conservation status of the environment					
Other	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Null
Accessibility					
-Transport facilities					
-Visiting hours					
-Outdoor visit					
-Indoor visit					
Proximity to other resources					
Existence of additional services					
-Accommodation					
-Restaurants					
Capacity limitation					

Table 3. Resource assessment

Source: Own elaboration.

- Dates and opening and closing times.
- Year of construction, beginning and end.
- Materials, indicating, where appropriate, if they are of local character and any other characteristic of interest.
- Relevant events or anecdotes during the construction period.
- Relationship of the building to its surroundings.
- Uses of the building and occupants in the case of dwellings.
- Possible historical facts related to the building.
- Historical anecdotes or anecdotes about the people who have inhabited these spaces.
- Hotels and restaurants in the vicinity.
- Other cultural offer in the surroundings.

Before going into the results of the fieldwork, it is interesting to note that, after an analysis of the tourist offer on routes based on contemporary architecture, it can be observed that the segment of visitors with specialised training, such as architects, have a more comprehensive proposal, which is materialised through guides, catalogues, travel blogs or websites. In many cases, the routes are proposed by professional associations. It should be borne in mind that, on the one hand, professionals and students of architecture are a segment accustomed to making trips to visit buildings and, above all, they have training that allows them to enjoy the experience of the visit without the support that the non-specialist public will require.

CONCLUSIONS

From the field study carried out, we can conclude that we can differentiate between two types of target public, those with a

background in architecture and design and the general public. Focusing on the first of these segments, we can affirm that, firstly, there is a wide offer which, in many cases, is proposed by professional associations and materialised through guides, catalogues, travel blogs or websites. Secondly, this segment, especially architects, is used to visiting buildings to improve their training. Thirdly, the information in the guides and routes has a language specific to their academic and professional field. In addition, professionals and students have training that allows them to enjoy the visit experience without the support the non-specialist public will require. For these reasons, we consider that the information provided on many routes does not have the capacity to attract a broader segment of tourists, as it is either insufficient or inadequate to allow them to enjoy the visit. Enhancement requires an important communication effort where the preparation and provision of materials are critical elements to enable their enjoyment and create an authentic visitor experience. Furthermore, the elaboration of the communication material must go beyond the characteristics of the building and incorporate elements that contextualise it with its surroundings and allow it to be brought closer to the visitor, such as its historical contextualisation and with the local culture, uses of the building over time or anecdotes.

The route's attractiveness depends largely on aspects beyond the heritage element itself. Accessibility, the existence of other nearby heritage elements, accommodation, restaurants, shops and leisure activities that are compatible with the visit are critical aspects of its success and sustainability. Beyond design, a shared strategy is needed in planning and management by the various agents involved: building owners, public, local or regional administrations, business

people, residents, tour operators and agencies, guides, restaurants and hotels, among others. Focusing on the marketing issue, it will be necessary to have marketing channels such as the presence on the websites of public institutions promoting tourism, guide agencies and travel agencies.

Information and communication technologies, APPs and geopositioning based on Google Maps are tools with great

potential. Their application to tourist routes opens the field to aspects such as easier access to information on the heritage element; a complete design of the route allowing the introduction of aspects that, although they are not heritage, generate satisfaction for the visitor, among others: access to means of transport, a design more adapted to the needs of the visitor and tourism, location of restaurants, shows and hotels, among others.

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